

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 8 are amended. No new matter has been added.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that claims 15, 16, and 18 contain allowable subject matter.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner Healy at the interview held April 5, 2006 are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicant's record of the interview.

Claims 1-14, 17, 19, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Yoshimura et al. (Yoshimura), U.S. Patent No. 6,611,635. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant respectfully points out that on page 3 of the Office Action, Yoshimura is identified as 736. Applicant assumes that this is a typographical error in that the reference being applied is Yoshimura, U.S. Patent No. 6,611,635. Accordingly, Applicant's arguments are directed to U.S. Patent No. 6,611,635 to Yoshimura et al. (hereinafter Yoshimura).

At the interview, Applicant's representative discussed the differences between Applicant's claimed subject matter and the disclosure of Yoshimura. As agreed at the interview, Yoshimura fails to disclose, wherein an optical signal not only enters the second element, but also passes over the second element enabling the optical signal to be almost simultaneously sent from the first element to the second element, as recited in claim 1.

Also, as agreed at the interview, Yoshimura fails to disclose, wherein an optical signal not only enters at least one of the plurality of second elements, but also passes over the at least one of the plurality of the second elements enabling the optical signal to be almost simultaneously sent from at least one of the first elements to the at least one of the second

elements while being transmitted to another one of the plurality of second elements, as recited in claim 8.

Further, as discussed at the interview, the body of EO material 626 of Yoshimura is formed in a Y-shaped body having a through section between waveguide 24c and a second output waveguide 24i, and a branch section from this through section to output waveguide 24h (Fig. 3; col. 7, lines 55-59). A portion of the EO material 626 of Yoshimura undergoes a change in its index of refraction, which in turn changes the propagation direction of the light so a major portion of the light goes into the output waveguide 24h (Fig. 3; col. 8, lines 1-8). Accordingly, the EO material 626 is part of a switch 26c that changes the direction of the light from waveguide 24i to waveguide 24h (see Fig. 3). Thus, the optical signal does not enter a receiving part of the second element (i.e. Y-branch 626).

Also, as discussed at the interview, the photo detector 628 of Yoshimura receives light from waveguide 24f (Fig. 4-3). However, the waveguide 24f of Yoshimura is not in physical contact with and does not cover at least a part of the photo detector 628, as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, Yoshimura does not disclose this feature as recited in claim 1 in addition to the features as agreed above with respect to claims 1 and 8.

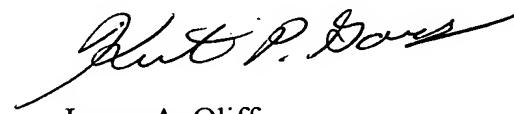
Thus, as agreed at the interview, Yoshimura does not disclose each and every feature of claims 1 and 8 and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 is inappropriate. Further, for the reasons discussed, Yoshimura does not suggest the subject matter of claims 1 and 8.

Because Yoshimura does not anticipate or suggest the subject matter of claims 1 and 8, Yoshimura cannot anticipate or suggest the subject matter of claims 2-14, 17, 19, and 20, which depend from claim 1, and the subject matter of claims 9-13, which depend from claim 8, for the reasons discussed with respect to claims 1 and 8 and for the additional features recited therein. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-20 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Request for Continued Examination

Date: April 13, 2006

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